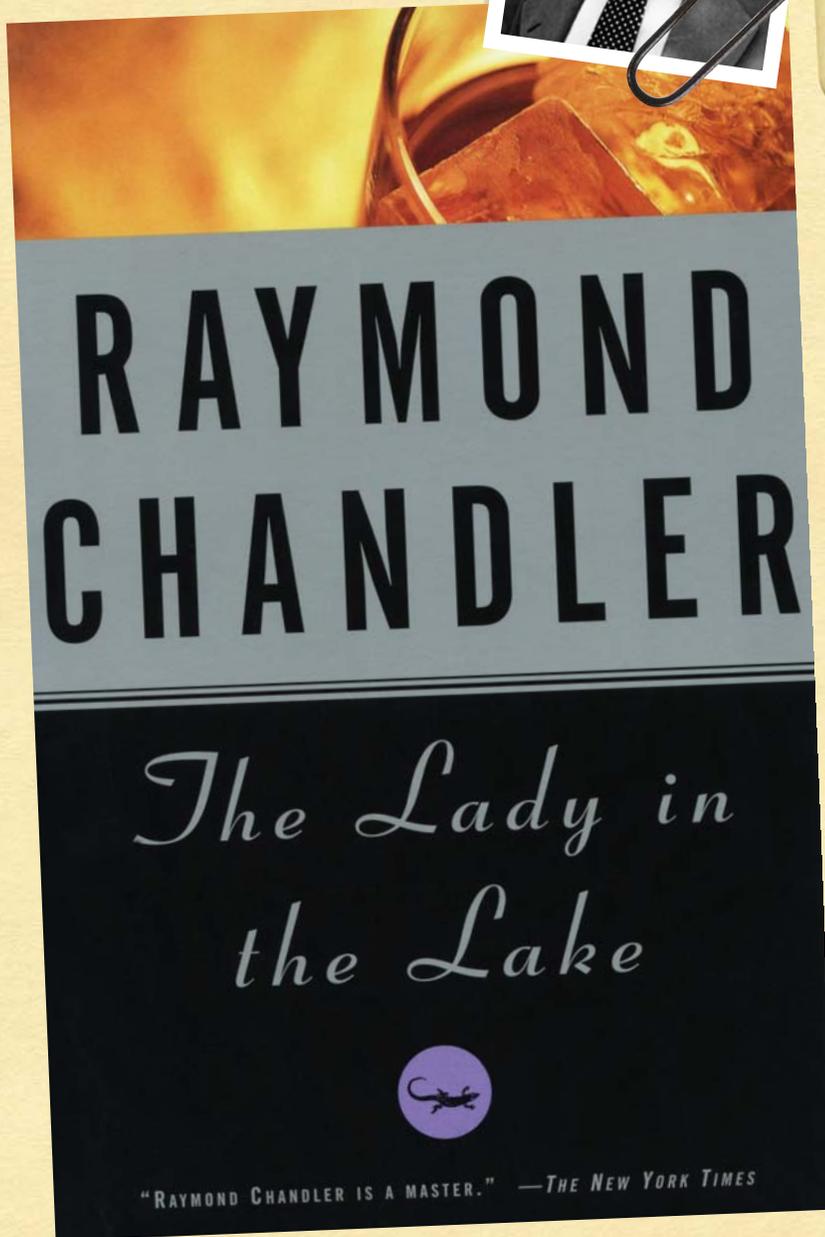


# 10 YEARS SANTA MONICA CITYWIDE READS

## JOIN A 2012 CITYWIDE BOOK CLUB

FEBRUARY 22  
THROUGH MARCH 31

For free public  
book discussion  
groups and other  
events, check the  
Santa Monica  
Citywide Reads website  
at [www.smpl.org/  
Citywide\\_Reads.aspx](http://www.smpl.org/Citywide_Reads.aspx)  
or call 310.458.8600



CWR2012 CHANDLER

SANTA MONICA PUBLIC  
LIBRARY



A VINTAGE  
CRIME/BLACK LIZARD  
PAPERBACK



W E L C O M E

2012 marks the tenth annual Santa Monica CITYWIDE READS, and Santa Monica Public Library is pleased to welcome you to this year's series. This community reading program encourages people who live, work in, or visit Santa Monica to read and discuss the same book at the same time in events held around the city.

This year's book is Raymond Chandler's **The Lady in the Lake**, a classic hard-boiled mystery by an esteemed local author, featuring a storyline that is partially set in our own city. Befitting CITYWIDE READS' tenth anniversary, the series will be bigger and better than ever, including book discussions, author talks with several best-selling writers, theatrical events, movie screenings, book discussions and much more. We're also expanding the program to include kids this year by featuring Bruce Hale's **Trouble Is My Beeswax**, a kid-friendly noir mystery starring fourth-grade private eye Chet Gecko.

**The Lady in the Lake** and **Trouble Is My Beeswax** are available from the Santa Monica Public Library or your local bookstore. Please plan on attending one of the many free, public events being held around the city from February 22 to March 31.

I hope that your participation in CITYWIDE READS is a rewarding experience that brings us together as a community through literature.

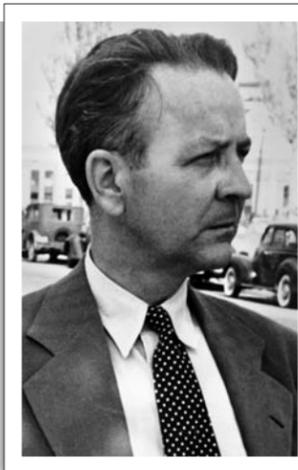


Greg Mullen  
City Librarian

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

"The detective story, even in its most conventional form, is difficult to write well."

-Raymond Chandler, *The Simple Art of Murder*



**Raymond Chandler** was born in Chicago in 1888. Following his parents' divorce in 1895, he moved with his mother to London, where they remained throughout his boyhood and college years. In 1912, Chandler returned to the United States and in 1913 settled in Los Angeles, which would remain his home for much of the rest of his life. It was in Los Angeles that he met Cissy Pascal, a married woman eighteen years his senior, with whom he began an affair. Following her divorce and his mother's death, Cissy and Raymond were married in 1924.

Chandler took a job as a bookkeeper in the oil industry, but his battles with alcoholism eventually resulted in his firing in 1932. With no paycheck coming in, Chandler taught himself how to write crime fiction by deconstructing Erle Stanley Gardner's formula for his Perry Mason stories and began submitting his work to the pulp magazines he most enjoyed reading. He saw his first short story, "Blackmailers Don't Shoot," published by *Black Mask* magazine in 1933. His first novel, **The Big Sleep**, was published in 1939, when Chandler was 51 years old, and it introduced the world to his cynical, wisecracking antihero, Philip Marlowe. He followed that work with many more short stories and full-length novels, including the classics **Farewell, My Lovely**, **The Lady in the Lake**, and **The Little Sister**. During this time, Chandler also worked in film and television, penning or co-writing such films as **Strangers on a Train** and the Oscar-nominated **Double Indemnity**.

In 1953, the novel **The Long Goodbye** was published and its change in tone from the author's previous novels reflected the fact that Chandler was nursing Cissy through a terminal illness that would take her life in 1954. Following his wife's death, Chandler fell into a depression and began drinking heavily again, going so far as to attempt suicide in 1955. He continued to write sporadically and frequently traveled between England and Southern California. In 1959, Chandler fell ill with pneumonia and died at the Scripps Clinic in La Jolla. He was buried at the Mount Hope Cemetery in San Diego. On Valentine's Day 2011, thanks to the efforts of several Chandler historians, Cissy Chandler's cremated remains were interred alongside Raymond's, reuniting the couple after a decades long, and unintended, separation.

PHOTOGRAPH: © Alfred A. Knopf. Courtesy of the Photography Collection, Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, University of Texas at Austin.

ABOUT THE BOOK

"Down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid. The detective in this kind of story must be such a man. He is the hero, he is everything... The story is his adventure in search of a hidden truth."

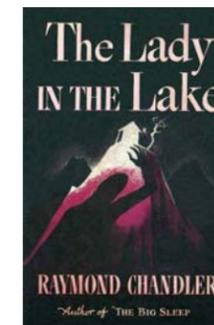
-Raymond Chandler, *The Simple Art of Murder*

First published in 1943 by Alfred A. Knopf, **The Lady in the Lake** was Raymond Chandler's fourth full-length novel and once again featured wisecracking, hard-as-nails private detective Philip Marlowe. As with the detective's previous adventures, the story begins with Marlowe being hired for what would seem to be a fairly standard missing persons case - the disappearance of a Los Angeles doctor's wife, presumably with her younger lover. The mystery quickly gets more tangled and complex as Marlowe follows the woman's trail and finds a series of dead bodies and crooked characters along the way.

While **The Lady in the Lake** was similar in style to Chandler's previous work, featuring his wry witticisms and clever wordplay, it also marked a departure for the author in that it takes his hero Marlowe outside of his standard beat of Los Angeles. In addition to the City of Angels, the story unfolds in two other locations that Chandler had a personal history with and lived in - remote "Little Faun Lake," his stand-in for Big Bear Lake, and corrupt "Bay City," his facsimile for Santa Monica. The novel's tone is perhaps the darkest of all the author's full-length works, reflecting

the time period - the height of World War II - and Chandler's anxious state of mind over his wife's illness, fibrosis of the lungs. Following the book's publication, Chandler took a six-year break from writing novels and shifted to screenwriting and script doctoring, most notably with his Oscar-nominated work on **Double Indemnity** and **The Blue Dahlia**. It was in this film-writing period that Raymond Chandler's fame would grow with the general public and critics began to acknowledge the quality and weight of his contribution to the hard-boiled genre.

Commenting on its 1943 release, *Time* magazine called **The Lady in the Lake** "an astringent, hard-bitten, expertly constructed and convincingly characterized story" and *The Saturday Review of Books* pronounced it "about as tough as they come - plus an air-tight plot, interesting characters, copious action, and ace-high writing." Today, **The Lady in the Lake** is published by Vintage Crime/Black Lizard, and is available at libraries and book stores.



1943 FIRST EDITION COVER

RECOMMENDED READS

**The Raymond Chandler Papers: Selected Letters and Nonfiction, 1909-1959**  
edited by Tom Hiney and Frank MacShane

Hiney and MacShane, both authors of separate Chandler biographies, gather some of the Chandler's sharpest and most erudite correspondence, revealing his thoughts on the craft of writing and the business of publishing, his battles with alcoholism, and even his love of cats. The letters show him to be just as witty and quotable as his fictional creation, Philip Marlowe.

**The Maltese Falcon** by Dashiell Hammett

Raymond Chandler's most obvious literary forebear, Dashiell Hammett, is considered by many to be the dean of hard-boiled crime fiction. In this, his most well-known novel, cynical private detective Sam Spade is pulled into a web of murder and intrigue by a mysterious femme fatale.

**Los Angeles Noir 2: The Classics** edited by Denise Hamilton

Raymond Chandler's 1939 short story, "I'll Be Waiting," kicks off this magnificent compilation of short fiction classics by masters of the hard-boiled crime genre including husband and wife Ross Macdonald and Margaret Millar, James M. Cain, Chester Himes, James Ellroy and Walter Mosley.

THANKS TO:



FOR SUPPORTING BOOK DISCUSSIONS AND PROGRAMS AND TO THE FRIENDS OF THE SANTA MONICA PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR THEIR ONGOING SUPPORT FOR CITYWIDE READS.

# SPECIAL CITYWIDE READS EVENTS

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## **An Evening with Michael Connelly & Robert Crais**

**Saturday, February 25 at 7:00pm**

**Lincoln Middle School Auditorium, 1501 California Avenue**

Best-selling mystery authors Michael Connelly and Robert Crais discuss the influence Raymond Chandler has had on their work and on the crime genre in general. Book sale and signing to follow.

## **A Touch of Naomi**

**Monday, February 27 at 6:30pm**

**Annenberg Beach House, 415 Pacific Coast Highway**

Mystery author Naomi Hirahara takes us on a tour of noir, accompanied by the torchy songs and sax of Doc & Renee.

## **Los Angeles Noir Now**

**Tuesday, March 6 at 7:00pm**

**Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard**

Author Denise Hamilton leads a discussion on the noir genre of today with authors Christopher Rice, Jim Pascoe, Gary Phillips and Naomi Hirahara.

## **Bay City and Beyond**

**Saturday, March 10 at 2:00pm**

**Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard**

A look back at the history of Santa Monica and Los Angeles in the noir period with authors Ernest Marquez ([Noir Afloat](#)), David Kipen ([Los Angeles in the 1930s](#)) and Alain Silver ([Raymond Chandler's Los Angeles](#)), and SMPL Image Archives Librarian Cynni Murphy.

## **The Lady in the Lake Live:**

### **Authors Reading Raymond Chandler**

**Friday, March 16 at 7:00pm**

**Santa Monica Bay Woman's Club, 1210 Fourth Street**

Judith Freeman, Janet Fitch and Denise Hamilton lead a star-studded list of authors in a staged, costumed reading of [The Lady in the Lake](#). Audience costumes encouraged.

## **The Masters of Los Angeles Noir**

**Tuesday, March 20 at 7:00pm**

**Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard**

Author Denise Hamilton discusses noir pioneers Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett and Ross Macdonald with their respective biographers Judith Freeman, Julie Rivett and Tom Nolan.

## **Staged Reading of "The Pencil"**

**Saturday, March 24 at 3:00pm**

**Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard**

Join us for a staged reading of Raymond Chandler's last Philip Marlowe short story, "The Pencil," adapted by Ed Horowitz and produced by the Ruskin Group Theatre.

## **Raymond Chandler Movie Screenings**

### **• Double Indemnity**

Wednesday, February 22 at 6:30pm

Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard

### **• The Big Sleep**

Saturday, March 3 at 2:00pm

Ocean Park Branch Library, 2601 Main Street

### **• Strangers on a Train**

Tuesday, March 13 at 7:00pm

Fairview Branch Library, 2101 Ocean Park Boulevard

### **• Murder My Sweet**

Monday, March 19 at 2:00pm

Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Avenue

### **• Lady in the Lake**

Thursday, March 22 at 6:30pm

Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard

### **• The Long Goodbye**

Q&A following with Elliott Gould (schedule permitting)

Sunday, March 25 at 2:00pm

Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard

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ALL PROGRAMS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. With only a simple, linear plot and a few zigzags, how does Chandler create intrigue?
2. How does the first person narrative affect your critical perspective of the story?
3. Marlowe observes and describes other characters and situations well, but reveals little of himself. How do we get to know Marlowe? Why does Chandler give us so little information about him?
4. What views of society does Chandler present? What role does Marlowe play in introducing the reader to social order?
5. Why does the author present different standards for crimes and punishments for Marlowe versus the other characters?
6. How does Bay City/Santa Monica reflect the society Chandler describes?
7. The mystery genre is sometimes dismissed by literary critics. In what ways does Chandler's writing transcend the genre label?
8. Chandler is a master of clever metaphors. What are some of your favorite metaphors from [The Lady in the Lake](#)?

## BOOK DISCUSSIONS

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Trained volunteer facilitators lead these free public book discussions. No registration required.

### **• Tuesday, February 28 at 4:00pm**

Panera Bread, 501 Wilshire Boulevard

### **• Thursday, March 1 at 7:00pm**

Ocean Park Branch Library, 2601 Main Street\*

### **• Wednesday, March 7 at 7:00pm**

Fairview Branch Library, 2101 Ocean Park Boulevard\*

### **• Monday, March 12 at 1:30pm**

Ken Edwards Center, 1527 Fourth Street\*

### **• Thursday, March 15 at 7:00pm**

Barnes & Noble, 1201 Third Street Promenade

### **• Saturday, March 17 at 11:00am**

Café Bolivar, 1741 Ocean Park Boulevard  
(no permit required for Saturday parking)

### **• Wednesday, March 21 at 7:00pm**

Montana Branch Library, 1704 Montana Avenue\*

### **• Saturday, March 31 at 11:00am**

Main Library, 601 Santa Monica Boulevard\*

\*City of Santa Monica facilities are wheelchair accessible. To request a disability-related accommodation, call Library Administration 310-458-8606 (TDD 395-8499) at least one week prior to the event.